

NUMBER THIRTEEN

The Hunchakists and the Master of Mysteries

By **ALAN BRAGHAMPTON**

Drawings by Karl Anderson

ASTRO, lounging on a huge velvet divan, puffing at his water pipe lazily, read the last page of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," and then tossed the paper covered book on the floor with a grunt.

Valeska looked up from her work, ready for his comment.

"If Stevenson had written that book this year, he'd have known more about dissociated personality," he remarked.

"Why, it's nothing but a parable, that's all," Valeska offered.

"Well, it might be more; it might be science as well. The fundamental idea is wrong. We haven't only two souls or personalities apiece, one good, one bad; we have an infinite number, according to modern psychology. Our normal self can break up into any number of combinations of its elements. That is why we are different persons when we're angry, when we dream, when we are drunk or insane."

"But isn't there a subconscious self that runs the body at such times?" said Valeska. "I've been reading about it. Some psychologists call it the 'subliminal' self."

"Rubbish!" Astro rose and walked up and down nervously. "They are not psychologists; they are metaphysicians, and not worth considering. They speak as if there was a sort of secret, submerged soul coiled up inside us like a chicken in an egg. An oracle in a well! There is no such thing. We are all of a piece!"

"But how about somnambulists who diagnose their own complaints and predict the course of their illness? How about the known cases of multiple personality,—Felida X and Miss Beauchamp in Boston? Their alternate selves were distinct and separate."

"You should read 'The Journal of Abnormal Psychology,'" said Astro. "Those selves are fortuitous combinations of the normal self's properties; they are, strictly, part-selves. The subjects are simply not all there."

"And those post hypnotic time experiments too?" she persisted. "I read of their suggesting that a subject should, just fifteen hundred and forty-seven minutes afterward, look at his watch and write down the time. He did it, in every such case."

"And you think he has a subliminal self that telephones to his waking personality? Nonsense! They managed to tap the mechanical part of his memory, that's all. It's like looking up a book in a library. There are no co-conscious personalities. What happens in 'automatic writing'? A person holds a pencil in his hand, and it seems to write of itself. Spirits? Rubbish! A subliminal self? Poppycock! The hand transcribes merely records of thoughts or memories that have been forgotten or were unnoticed, that's all. We don't think of half we see and hear; we pass myriads of faces in the street, for instance; but everything is recorded, as on a phonographic cylinder, and, under abnormal conditions, the record may be reproduced."

"Well," said Valeska, "it's all uncanny. Normal psychology is difficult enough to understand; but when one is four or five different persons I give up. How many am I?" she added merrily, tossing a mischievous glance at him, as she put on her hat and furs.

"You're a million—each nicer than the rest."

"Then I'm glad!" She looked very demure as she walked toward the door; but she stopped there to smile frankly back at him, then threw him a good night and vanished.

ASTRO yawned, went to the bookcase, and returned to the couch with a book by Leonide Keating. For awhile he labored with its grandiloquent mysticism, with the secret of om and the central crystal of the universe; then suddenly he sat erect. A noise in the outer room had attracted his attention. Another moment told him that Valeska had returned and was speaking to some one. His name was called.

He went out, to find her with a strange girl, strangely clad. Dark haired and dark skinned, handsome, oriental, she was of medium height, with a red shawl drawn about her head, and a short plaid skirt, showing her little feet incased in men's heavy shoes. She had a wild, frightened look in her eyes, as Valeska tried to calm her. Her mouth trembled pitifully, and she crouched in an attitude of fear and self effacement. She looked quickly round at Astro, and ran for the door. Evidently she saw a new terror in him, and trembled all over with excitement. It was all Valeska could do to restrain her.

Astro looked the girl over deliberately, noting every detail of countenance and costume, then he raised his eyebrows.

"It's the strangest thing!" Valeska explained. "I

was walking along 34th-st. when I met her, and as I passed I thought that she was probably some Italian organ grinder's wife. Then she turned back and ran up to me and seized my hand. She was evidently terribly frightened at something; but she wouldn't speak. I haven't been able to get her to speak yet. She seemed to want my protection; so I brought her back here. Who do you suppose she can be?"

Astro addressed the girl in Italian; but got no response. The girl eyed him as a dog watches the boy that has been torturing him. A question in Russian was as unsuccessful. Greek, Turkish, Yiddish,—she appeared to understand none of these, or else refused to answer. The Master of Mysteries became interested.

"Bring her into the studio," he said to Valeska. "We'll have something to eat here. Perhaps she is hungry. If so, that will gain us her confidence." So saying, he went to the telephone and ordered a dinner for three sent up from a nearby restaurant.

AS Valeska gently led the stranger toward the entrance to the studio, the girl suddenly gave a wail, clasped her hands to her bosom, and stared fixedly, in an ecstasy of terror, at the office wall. There was a large one-day calendar there above Valeska's desk, the sheet showing the words, "Thursday, May 13." Astro hurried to the girl's side, watching her keenly. Valeska put her arms about her reassuringly; but it was not till she had drawn her softly away from the sight of the calendar that the girl's perturbation was over. She walked doggedly into the great dim studio, as if half-asleep. Valeska with friendly insistence placed her in a comfortable chair. There the girl sat, staring with expressionless face at the light.

"Well," said Valeska, as they watched her, waiting for the dinner to be brought in, "is she deaf or dumb or half-witted or drugged or what?"

Astro had not taken his eyes from the figure of his mysterious visitor. "She's an Oriental, of course. That is why she's afraid of me. She has been through some terrible nervous ordeal, I think. I believe she hasn't had enough to eat. Wait till we have had dinner, and then I'll see what I can do with her. Poor thing! I'm glad it was you and not a police officer that found her, Valeska."

The girl began to look about timidly, but with little apparent curiosity. Valeska undid the girl's shawl from her head. A wave of black, fine, curly hair fell with the covering and made the face more picturesque. She nestled a little closer to her protector; held Valeska's hand to her own cheek. The two, vividly blond and brunette, made a striking picture together.

On Astro's table was a small desk calendar, with a memorandum sheet for each day. He quietly took it up and placed it in the girl's lap. Instantly she had a new fit of terror, and leaped up in alarm. Standing in the full light of the electric lamp, they could see her mouth working convulsively as she stared at the number 13. She started with a run for the door. Valeska, quicker than Astro, caught and held her, and again attempted to soothe her.

"Oh, don't try any more experiments with her yet!" she implored. "The poor thing can't stand it. She is suffering so that it makes my heart ache. What can be the matter?"

"Aphasia, for one thing," said Astro, seating himself a little way off. "She tried to speak hard enough; but she couldn't. The girl is not deaf nor dumb, anyway. It is growing decidedly interesting."

By degrees the girl was coaxed back to the chair, and by the time the dinner had been brought in she was more easily persuaded to take a seat at the table beside Valeska. Indeed, it was evident that she was nearly starving. She ate ravenously, with great mouthfuls, picking up the food in her hands. She



She Stared Terror Stricken at the Office Wall.

was not to the manor born, but her prettiness made her solecisms pardonable. Once or twice during the meal she stopped, looked at Valeska, and seemed to be trying to speak; but no words came. Her hunger satisfied, she seemed more tractable and courageous. She looked at Astro without fear. Toward Valeska, she showed the devotion of a dog.

THE table cleared away, Astro took a sheet of paper and wrote down the number 13. The girl trembled, but now not so violently. She looked up at Valeska with a mute appeal.

"Don't!" said Valeska.

Astro wrote a column of three figures: 6, 5, and 2. The girl stared at it without intelligence. The Roman numerals XIII did not excite her at all. Next, he wrote the word "thirteen"; she was still unmoved. He spoke the word; no response. Then he placed the paper in front of her, and put the pencil in her hand. She took it with evident familiarity, and her hand trembled. They saw her bite her lip,—she was indubitably attempting to communicate with them,—but she was unable to make a mark on the sheet.

"H'm!" said Astro thoughtfully. "Agraphia, as well. Now we're getting warmer. I think I shall get it after awhile."

"Why, to me it seems more impossible than ever!" Valeska said.

"Strange that we should have just been talking about it," he replied. "It's a case of lost identity, dissociated personality, beyond doubt. I think I can solve the riddle if I can hypnotize her. I'll try."

He did try, but without avail. At his first mesmeric gestures she shrank from him in fear. As he persisted, trying with a crystal ball held in front of and above her eyes, to send her into a hypnotic sleep by means of a partial paralysis of the optic nerve, she resolutely defended herself. The strangeness of his motions aroused her suspicion, and she refused to concentrate her attention sufficiently to be influenced. Direct verbal suggestion, the simplest and most effective method of inducing hypnosis, was of course out of the question, since she did not appear to understand any language he spoke.

"There is only one other method, if even that will succeed," Astro said at last. "If we can get her to write automatically, we may learn something. Her agraphia prevents her writing with her conscious mind. We'll try what is called the method of 'abstraction.' It is a common experiment. You hold your patient absorbed in a conversation that compels his utmost mental capacity,—in Hebrew, for

instance, if he understands Hebrew,—and while that is going on some one places a pencil in his hand and whispers in his ear. What you have called the 'subconscious self' communicates by writing, and the normal, conscious personality is unaware that he is writing."

"But how can we engage her mind so absorbingly?" Valeska asked hopelessly. "We don't know her language, whatever it may be."

ASTRO paced the room for several minutes, thinking deeply. He stopped occasionally to look at the girl fixedly, and resumed his contemplation. Finally he went up to her, examined her palms, and his face lighted up.

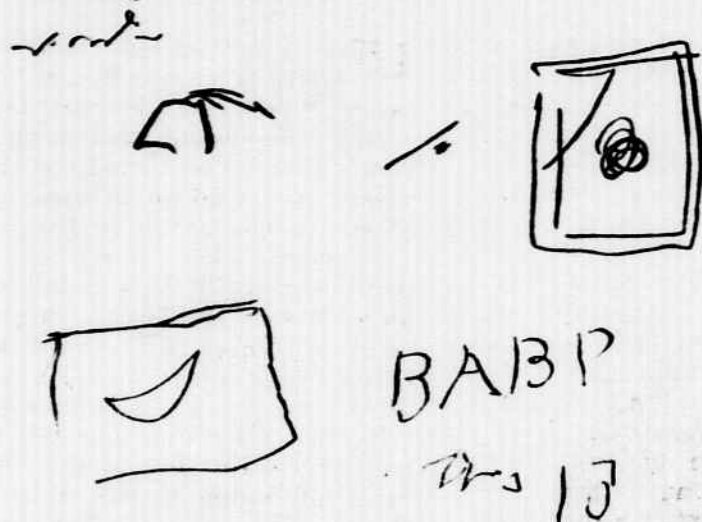
"I believe she's musical!" he said.

Valeska stared.

"But then—" "We'll see. Have the pencil ready to put in her hand, and the paper on the table by it. Watch her closely, and see if she is affected by the music. If she seems to be, give her the pencil."

With that, he walked to the piano, sat down, and began to play the Tenth Rhapsody of Liszt. As he swung into the abandon of its more temperamental passages, he seemed himself to be absorbed, to lose himself in the intricate harmonies. He was a skilled and artistic musician. He swayed to and fro, giving himself up physically and mentally to the passion and the beauty of the themes, and it was not till the echoes of the last divine chords had ceased reverberating that he slowly turned on the piano stool and seemed to awaken.

"I've got it!" cried Valeska, and, springing up, she ran over and handed him a sheet of paper. It was partly covered with rude drawings, apparently meaningless rough sketches, mingled with attempts at lettering.



He took the sheet eagerly, and went to the table under the electric lamp to scrutinize the figures.

"It's not very promising material, is it?" said Valeska.

"On the contrary, it's a fine beginning; only it will take a bit of doing to make it out."

"I see the fatal 13 has put in its appearance again."

The girl, who had seemed to be in a sort of stupor, now leaned over the table and inspected the sheet. At sight of the figures 13 she gave a moan, and threw her arms about Valeska, trembling all over.

"Poor girl!" said Astro. "I'm afraid there's something big back of all this. She's a Turk, or an Armenian, or a Syrian. See the Turkish flag that she has roughly drawn here? . . . Babi . . . Wait!"

He had risen to go to the bookcase, when the girl reached over and would have seized the paper, had not Valeska prevented her. Astro turned to ejaculate: "Babi!" and again, "Baha-Ullah!"

The girl quivered; but did not speak.

"She may be a member of the Bahai sect, followers of the Bab, the Incarnation of the Almighty, whose religion is not tolerated by the Faithful in Persia. They are all kept to one city, where they live like primitive Christians; indeed, their faith is a mixture of Christianity and Mohammedanism. We'll see. Valeska, she's had enough for to-night. You must take her home and take care of her, and bring her back to-morrow. Before then I must stay up and think it out."

FOR hours after Valeska had left with her ward, Astro walked up and down the length of the great, dim studio. Occasionally he threw himself at full length on the big couch in concentrated thought.



"All Right," Said the Evil Looking Man. "Three Dollars a Week."

At intervals he stood erect, his eyes fixed in abstraction on some trophy of arms on the wall, or gazing into the lucent transparency of his crystal ball. Once or twice he sat down at the table and gazed long at the hieroglyphic marks made on the paper by the strange girl. At three in the morning, he partially undressed and lay down on the couch to sleep. He rose at seven, bathed, and went outdoors for a walk.

WHEN he returned, an hour later, Valeska was in the studio alone. Her eyes were red; she seemed ashamed and self-reproachful.

"The girl has disappeared!" she exclaimed the moment Astro appeared. "When I woke up, she wasn't in the room. She must have risen and dressed while I was asleep. But I found this." She held out a short, curved dagger, in a morocco sheath.

Astro, withdrawing the blade, found it was engraved with an Arabic inscription. He read the motto aloud:

"For the heart of a dog, the tongue of the serpent!" "Ah!" he commented, "this may help some. Our little friend apparently isn't so timid as she appeared. But, somehow, this doesn't look like the property of a Babist. In spite of their many persecutions, I believe they are usually non-resistants. Well, Valeska, we'll have to find the girl, now! Come along with me immediately."

His private brougham was already at the door in waiting. Both jumped in, and as they drove to the southern end of the city Astro explained:

"There are two Syrian quarters in New York. One is in Brooklyn, the other down on Washington-st., near the Battery. We'll go to that one first, and see what we can find there. The Turkish flag reminds me that that is often hung outside stores where they sell Turkish rugs. We'll try that clue afterward."

Reaching Washington-st., the two left the brougham and walked toward the Battery, past rows of squalid houses. At every corner Astro stopped and gazed about deliberately.

FINALLY, he seized Valeska's arm with a quick gesture. "Look at that sign!" he exclaimed.

On West-st., facing the Hudson River, but with its rear abutting on a vacant lot on Washington-st., was a huge soap factory. Painted on the dead wall was a sign whose letters were eight or ten feet in height.

Valeska read it aloud: "Use Babrock's Brown Soap." She stopped and looked at Astro in bewilderment. "What about it?"

He drew the drawing from his pocket and pointed out the lettering. "Don't you see?" he cried. "BABIP! That's a part of the sign, surely. Look at those two buildings on each side of the sign. Now look at this row of houses. From some one of those windows the sign must present the appearance she has drawn. Making the drawing subconsciously, she has merely copied something with which she has been familiar,—seeing it, probably, every day. We must find the window from which the sign looks just like her drawing."

He looked at the sign again carefully, estimating its height and the relative position of the two buildings whose roofs would cut off the first and last group of letters. A rough triangulation led him to a house

in the lower part of which was a cobbler's shop. This he entered.

"Are there any rooms to let in this house?" he asked of the man at the bench.

The man nodded. "Go up stairs and ask at the second floor," he replied. "You see Garbon Soumissin; he keeps the house."

Up stairs went Astro and Valeska, and plunged into a dark, narrow hallway. A doorway opened part way and a whiskered man looked out. He had an evil face, blotched with red spots, and wore a fez. He was smoking a Turkish cigarette.

"What you want here?" "I'd like to look at your front room, third floor."

A murmur of voices came from inside the room. The man turned and growled some foreign oath. Then he turned and looked at Astro with a vicious inquisition.

"All right," he said at last: "you go up. Door open. Three dollars a week."

ASTRO waited for no more; but ran up the stairs, followed by his assistant. Once out of earshot, he stopped for a moment to pull out the paper again, and pointed to the first drawing on the sheet. "Fez," he said, and looked at her meaningly.

"The old man down stairs?" "Probably. Now we'll find out what they have been up to."

The hall bed room was incredibly dirty, but contained nothing but a cot bed with evil coverings, a chair, and a crazy washstand, over which hung a square, cracked mirror. Astro first went to the grimy window and looked out. He pointed to the sign, and Valeska followed his eyes. One of the buildings across the street cut off the first word, "use," and the other, with a small dormer, obscured all after "bab" with the exception of the upper half of the R. It showed, in fact, precisely as the girl had drawn it.

"This is the room, all right. Now let's examine it."

He took up the chair first, and looked it over carefully. Then he pointed to marks on the sides of the back, where the paint was worn smooth. The marks were about an inch wide, and similar ones showed on the legs and on the side rails of the seat.

"This is where straps have chafed the paint," he commented. "She was undoubtedly fastened securely. Did you notice where the marks or bruises were on her?"

"Yes; they were bad enough for me to remember. There were red marks on her wrists and on her arms below her shoulders; and her arms were almost covered with bruises; but small ones."

"Oh, they pinched her, no doubt. Undoubtedly she had a rough time of it, if one may judge the character of the villain with the fez. Well, we must find her. There's no use inquiring here. If they have used this room for a torture chamber, we'll get nothing out of them, and they'll grow suspicious."

They went down stairs, and, while Valeska waited in the street, Astro drove a bargain with Garbon Soumissin. Luckily the lower hall was dark, and the Turk could not perceive Astro's oriental countenance. But the Master of Mysteries had an important piece of news to tell when he rejoined Valeska.

"They were talking Arabic, or rather Turkish. I heard one of them quote the motto we saw on the dagger. Now I know what they are. Have you heard of the Hunchakists?"

The papers had been so full of one of the recent murders of this dreaded Armenian society, that Valeska knew roughly what the name implied.

"Every country seems to have its guerrilla assassins," said Astro, as they drove up town. "But the Armenian Hunchakists are more dangerous than any of the others, because they are better organized. Their object is usually extortion. Now we must visit the rug merchants. I'm afraid we're on the track of something serious this time."

THEIR route led them directly into the heart of the mystery. On Eighteenth-st., where, in front of a Turkish rug store, the crescent of Turkey hung out, there was a great crowd gathered, pressing about the entrance. It took Astro little time to discover the cause of the disturbance. The merchant, Marco Dyorian, had been found, when his shop was opened by his head bookkeeper, lying in a pool of blood in his office, shot in the back. He was not dead, though mortally wounded and unconscious. He was now at the hospital, at the point of death.

A policeman guarded the door, preventing anyone from entering. Astro and Valeska caught sight of his helmet over the heads of the bystanders, and when the crowd eddied they saw his face.

"Why, it's McGraw!" "So it is!" said Astro. "What luck!"

They squirmed their way through the crowd, to find the burly police officer who with Astro's assistance had been able to gain considerable reputation in connection with the Macdougall-st. dynamite outrage, with whom he was now fast friends. Indeed, McGraw owed his lieutenant's cap to the help of the Master of Mysteries. He therefore welcomed them both with a grin.

"What is the straight of this, McGraw?" Astro asked.

"Hunchakist murder, sure!" responded the lieutenant.

"I thought as much. Who did it?" "Oh, we got 'em all right this time. No thanks

Continued on page 18

The New Model No. 24 Marlin



Repeating Shotgun

This new 6-shot model is the simplest, surest, and fastest 12-gauge repeater made.

It has the solid top, side ejection and double extractors—special Marlin features of comfort and convenience. The closed-in breech keeps the action clean and the shells dry—keeps out rain, snow, dirt, leaves, twigs and sand.

The new take-down construction allows you to take gun apart in ten seconds for cleaning or packing, yet the joint is always as firm and rigid as in a solid frame, non-take-down gun.

The fat forearm fits your hand and helps quick operation.

The full choked guns are guaranteed close-shooting, hard-hitting guns, and are unequalled for ducks, geese, foxes and all long-range work.

A circular giving large illustration, with full description of this handsome new gun, sent free on request or with our complete 136-page catalog for 3 stamps.



The Marlin Firearms Co.

82 Willow Street
NEW HAVEN, CONN.

3 H.P. The Refined Motor

Immediate Delivery



Only 4 movable parts. Bore 3 1/2, stroke 3 1/2, turning 12 in. propeller, 17 pitch, 300 to 800 revolutions a minute. Every one fully tested and guaranteed for two years. Write for Catalog and address of nearest agent.

Thrall-Fishback Motor Co.
45 Fort St., E., Detroit, Mich., U.S.A.

"SAVE THE HORSE" SPAVIN CURE



TUSCOLA, ILLS.—I had a horse with a bony growth on knee, the leg was stiff, he moved side ways to go. Asking my druggist for something to cure it, he called my attention to your guarantee. Fearful it was too long standing, I had him write the company. In a short time got letter to sell me on the guarantee. So I bought it and used it. Within ten days a diminishment could be seen, and before I used all the medicine could not notice a particle of lameness, and the enlargement had nearly all gone. Have been using the horse all the time since, and notice no lameness in that leg whatever. I would not have believed any medicine could have done the work so effectually. P. J. GATES.

\$5.00 a bottle, with signed contract. Send for copy, booklet and letters from business men and trainers on every kind of case. Permanently cures Spavin, Thoroughpin, Ringbone (except low), Curb, Splint, Capped Hock, Windpuff, Shoe Ball, Injured Tendons and all Lameness. No scar or loss of hair. Horse works as usual. Dealers or Express Paid. Troy Chemical Company, 111 Commercial Ave., Hinghamton, N. Y.

LOOKING AHEAD?
If so, take advantage of today's opportunities for the merchant, farmer, fruit grower and business man along the Pacific Coast Extension of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway.
Descriptive Books Free F. A. Miller, G. P. A., Chicago

mistake, but she quietly looked her wonder into the eyes of the man who had bent down to her. "My own heart," said he in a voice that shook, "I am Van Buskirk. I tried to tell you yesterday; but sometimes a man's preconceived determinations are stronger than his loving impulses, and when I saw your pride and ambition—I was a fool; but now, ah Heaven!" He knelt and gathered her close to him, and neither found need for words, since eyes and heartbeat made language in that supreme moment.

"It was so mean of you!" she whispered at last.

"It was! It was dreadful; but oh, sweetheart, if you knew the curse of suspicion that the money has brought to me, and could know how I longed to be sure of my love—" He didn't finish, for she had laid her hand lightly across his lips and was smiling up at him.

"Didn't I tell you yesterday that the dell was lucky for this, and didn't you observe that I led you right down into the very heart of it?"

"Ahem!" A discreet cough sounded from a remarkable distance away, and the two sat regarding each other with innocent admiration from a respectable distance, when the butler, obsequious and wooden, said from the doorway:

"Begging your pardon, the lady at the door

says to please come on, as how she is afraid you will miss your boat."

Van Buskirk laughed and held out his hand to Roberta. "It does seem a little hard to have to shout out the announcement at the top of my own voice," he said; "but it must be done, and after all I have no quarrel to make with your aunt's deafness."

"How is your secretary," asked Roberta, hanging back shyly. "I came to inquire, you know."

"Oh, doing beautifully, thank you," he replied politely, and then with sudden warmth, "Dear old chap! It isn't such a very bad crack in his skull, and you must help me make it worth his while. Come, though, we must break the news to Mrs. Layson. I am anxious to begin getting acquainted."

She picked nervously at the gloves which she was holding in her hand, and they passed out of the room.

"Aunt Ella has been so anxious to meet Mr. Van Buskirk," she said hesitantly, "that I believe she will understand if you speak in your ordinary tone of voice. In fact, she isn't half so deaf as she ought to be, and not at all dumb." Her eyes met his in a disconcerted look.

"You mischievous child!" he exclaimed in a flash of understanding.

Number Thirteen

Continued from page 10

to you, sir, for once, though I'd always be glad of your help. This one's a girl who done it."

Astro and Valeska looked at each other. "A girl?"

"Yes, sir. They'll be bringing her down presently. It's only fifteen minutes ago we got her. She was hiding out in a back closet where nobody thought to look at first. She was in a dead faint."

"What does she look like?"

"Faith, I don't know that myself. I've only just got here with the reserves. But if you stand here, you'll see her come down. There's the wagon already. Stand back there!"

The crowd scattered, and the patrol wagon drove up with a clatter. Several officers jumped out and ran up stairs.

Astro turned to Valeska and spoke under his breath. "What time did you see her last?"

"I got up about midnight, and she was lying on the couch."

She put her hand on his arm. "Oh, it couldn't have been she!" she exclaimed.

At that moment the officers brought their prisoner down stairs. It was indeed the girl that had been in the studio the night before, and had gone home with Valeska. Just as the group passed, Astro touched McGraw's shoulder.

"Let me speak to her a moment. I know this girl."

McGraw stared; but his faith in the occult powers of the seer were so great that he delayed the officers. They stopped for a moment. Astro addressed the girl in Turkish.

"Let me help you," he said.

She looked at him sulkily. But it was not with the blank, expressionless face of yesterday. Her brows drew together.

"I don't know you," she said at last.

Valeska pushed forward and took her hand. "Don't you know this lady?" Astro asked.

The girl stared. Some half-forgotten memory seemed to stir within her. Her lips moved silently as she stared hard at Valeska's face. Then she shook her head, and said, "I don't know."

"I can't keep 'em waiting," McGraw whispered. "Let her go, and you can call at the Tombs to see her again. I'll see that you get in. Go on, now!"

The girl was escorted to the wagon and took her seat, facing the crowd stolidly, an officer on each side of her. Once before they drove away her eyes turned to where Valeska stood in the doorway, and the same puzzled expression crossed her face.

"McGraw," said Astro, after the wagon had gone, "how'd you like to get a captain's commission?"

McGraw hastily took him aside. "You don't mean to say you know about this job already?" he asked excitedly.

"I know one thing. A man you want lives at 543 Washington-st., and I think his name is Garbon Soumissin. At any rate, I'd advise you to get right down there immediately and run in everyone you find in the house. Hurry up before they've gone!"

McGraw's eyes gleamed. "And you'll coach me then what to do?" he asked.

"Yes."

"All right." Hastily summoning a police sergeant, he gave him a few orders, and then hurried to the station.

"Where was the wounded man taken?" Astro asked of the sergeant.

"To the receiving hospital."

"We'll go over there first, then." And Astro and Valeska made their way to the brougham and ordered the driver to the place.

"But," said Valeska, "how queerly she acted. I'm so disappointed that she didn't recognize me, after all I'd done for her. I don't know what to make of it."

"Don't you see? She has waked up. Yesterday she was quite another person, a dissociated personality. She had no memory, and had even lost the power to talk or write. That is often the case. Owing to some severe mental shock, her normal personality was broken up into parts, so to speak. She had just enough of the functions of her mind synthesized to have volition, and that part-self

resembled a crazy person. She had been tortured and starved, no doubt in order to force her to commit this crime, by Soumissin. Somehow she managed to escape from that house, and then her reason left her. You found her what she was, half-witted, with only sense enough to appeal to your protection. She had forgotten everything—everything, that is, except something concerning the number 13. Now the question is, When did she come to herself and her full rationality? Was it when she got up in your room to leave you—"

"Or was it when she got into the rug store?" Valeska added, with a look of horror in her eyes.

"That's the question. Let's hope that Dyorian is conscious by the time we reach the hospital. Everything depends on that!"

ARRIVED at the hospital, Astro entered the office and asked for the house physician. A few words only were necessary to explain the palmist's right of inquiry, and his description of the Syrian girl's mental condition was of great professional interest to the doctor. He promised to go to the Tombs and see her as soon as possible. Dyorian, it seemed, lay at the point of death; but, finding how important it was to have the exact time of the shooting determined, the doctor consented to go up to the ward and attempt to revive him sufficiently to answer the question. Astro and Valeska waited for him in the office.

It was fifteen minutes before he returned. "I could just barely make him understand," he said; "but I am sure that he did at last. With almost his last breath he whispered, 'Ten o'clock,' adding that he didn't know who shot him. He died before I left the bedside."

ACTING on Astro's hint, McGraw not only succeeded in capturing a half-dozen Turks and Armenians in the Washington-st. den, but, exercising the "third degree" in a manner for which he was famous, extorted a confession from one of the prisoners. It was the more easy because the man, who had honestly believed himself to be working for the cause of Armenian freedom, discovered that he was merely the tool of a band of blackmailers and murderers. He had witnessed the cruel torture

of the young Syrian girl; but had been told that she was a Turkish spy who was plotting to betray the Armenian cause to the Imperial Divan.

On hearing her alibi, sworn to by Valeska, the girl was released; but it was ten days under the care of the hospital doctor before her nerves were recovered enough for her to be brought to the studio. She had been told of Valeska's kindness; but could remember nothing that had happened since her mind first began to wander under the effects of pain and starvation. But her intuition recognized her protectress without the aid of reason, and she fell on her knees like a slave at Valeska's feet. She could not speak a word of English; but her eyes were sufficiently eloquent to prove her gratitude. She treated Astro as if he was her lord and master, watching him continually.

After she had told of her awakening to her full reason in Valeska's room, she described the terror that had come over her at the thought of Dyorian. The thirteenth was the day set for his murder. Her tormentors had in vain tried to force her to do the deed; but, when they found she was intractable, they had told her that, whether she did it or not, Dyorian should surely die on the thirteenth. It was with the idea of saving him from his fate that she made more strenuous attempts to escape, and, after her memory had gone, the number 13 still inspired her with terror and dread. Awakening at Valeska's, this thought had been her first, and she dressed quietly and stole out of the house to warn him. She had found the rug merchant already shot, and the horror of the scene had in her weak state again deprived her of reason. She had run from the body—and that was all she could remember until she was restored to consciousness by two policemen. Then, her fear of being accused of being the murderess had nearly distraught her wits again.

She looked curiously now at the pictures she had drawn while in the state of abstraction, and identified the sign, the fez, the Turkish flag, and the number 13.

"But what is this one?" Astro asked, pointing to the one drawing he had not identified.

The girl shuddered, and reached for Valeska's hand. When she could speak, she explained to Astro:

"It was awful,—you can't know how awful it was till you have tried it. I was ten days strapped to that chair, and on the wall right opposite my head was a mirror. I had to look at myself all day. It grew more and more horrible, till I couldn't stand it. By turning my head I could see the sign, but always my own face was in front of me, staring, staring, staring. It grew hideous, sinister, diabolic. After awhile it wasn't I, at all. It was a devil leering at me, and I knew he was inside of me looking through my own eyes. Oh, God!" She paused, and looking up at Valeska said simply, "She is lucky. She can look at her face in the glass. I can't ever use a mirror any more. It frightens me."

Astro nodded his head slowly. Then he said, with a faint smile, "Yes, I can fancy no more exquisite torture for a woman to bear."

Then, before he translated the speech to Valeska, he turned to her with a whimsical expression.

"What would you do if you were to be deprived of mirrors of any kind for the rest of your life?"

"I think I'd commit suicide," she replied, blushing.

"There'd be no need for that. I shall always be able to tell you how pretty you are. But now we must cure this little girl. I'm sure that a hypnotic treatment will soon convince her how pretty she is, and she won't be afraid to prove it."

The next Master of Mysteries story, "Why Mrs. Burbank Ran Away," will appear August 16.

FEATS OF THE INSANE

By George Bancroft Griffith

from the New York State lunatic asylum did it."

THERE is a deal of sound sense at times in the remarks of insane persons; indeed, it is to be borne in mind that great keenness is closely allied to madness.

An inmate of a Wisconsin lunatic asylum escaped a few years ago and went to Racine, where he presented himself before a civil service examining board for a position in the municipal service requiring exceptional qualifications of an intellectual character. He came out of the examination at the top of the list, and was duly certified for the appointment before his identity was discovered. Then he was returned to the asylum.

While one of the patients of the State lunatic asylum at Utica, New York, who was formerly a physician, was taking his accustomed stroll for air and exercise, he was attracted to a house not far from the asylum by the cries of a young girl, who in climbing over a fence had fallen and broken her arm. On entering the door he ascertained that the poor, decrepid, bedridden mother and the unfortunate girl, whose labor was the only support of the two, were the only occupants. A boy had been sent for a physician or surgeon. The doctor at once set and splinted the broken limb.

The old lady with tears of joy and gratitude, exclaimed, "Doctor, what's to pay?"

"Oh, nothing," he replied; "I am amply repaid in the satisfaction this opportunity has afforded me to relieve your daughter's distress."

"Thank you, dear doctor, and God bless you! But when the doctor we have sent for arrives, who shall we say set the arm,—what name and address?"

"Tell him," said our doctor, "that a patient

Dr. Bjornstrom, superintendent of a lunatic asylum at Stockholm, introduced a printing press and some type into the establishment for the benefit of an insane compositor. The other patients became interested in printing, and the doctor soon gave them a more expensive apparatus. The result was the publication of the doctor's book on "Disease of the Mind," which was set up, printed, and bound by the patients, and is pronounced a very good piece of work in every respect.

Now and then after Dean Swift's splendid intellect had fallen into ruin, there were gleams of its original brightness. Taking a walk one day with his physician, he noticed a new building he had not seen before, and asked what it was.

"That, Mr. Swift, is the magazine for arms and powder for the security of the city of Dublin."

"Oh, oh!" said Swift, pulling out his pocket-book, "let me take an item of this; it is worth remarking. 'My tablets,' as Hamlet says, 'my tablets; memory, put down that,' which led to the following epigram, supposed to be the last verse he ever wrote:

"Behold a proof of sense:
Here Irish wit is seen:
When nothing's left that's worth defense,
We build a magazine."

A friend was once talking with a crazy woman, when a stingy man passed by. "Do you see that man," said she, with cunning smile. "You could blow his soul through a humming-bird's quill, into a mosquito's eye, and the mosquito wouldn't wink."